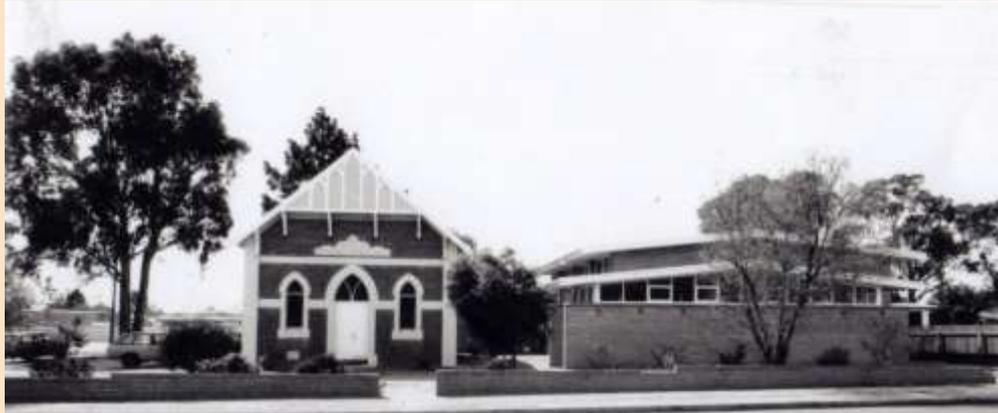


A History of Newton Methodist Church



The Newton Uniting Church began as the Newton Methodist Church in November 1911 in the hall at the rear of the Council chambers on Newton Road and was conducted by the Home Missionaries from Magill. In 1916 Rev. A.A. Smith was appointed to Magill and regularly rode his bicycle to preach at Newton. In 1919 a special fund was begun for the building of a church and a gift of land with a frontage of 50 feet facing Montacute Road was received on the death of Mr George White in 1920. In 1921 the White family handed over deeds for 100 feet instead of the original 50 feet as a gift to the church.

A church to seat 100 people was built and Miss Olive Pope laid the foundation stone on 13th December 1924. Mrs White unlocked the door of the church at the opening service on 14th March 1925.

As the district developed the church grew to such a level that in 1964 the Sunday School had 27 teachers and 234 students. With the church unable to cope with the numbers attending the decision was made to build a hall and the foundation stone was laid on 13th December 1964, forty years to the day after the laying of the foundation stone of the church. In 1969 the Sunday School peaked at 250 students with a staff of 37 however, from this point numbers began to decline until by 1976 the average attendance was 110 students with 20 teachers. Likewise numbers on the church roll at this time had dropped to 149. Numbers continued to fall and following the inauguration of the Uniting Church in Australia on 2 June 1977 there were 60 members present. By the end of 1988 Newton's average attendance at the main service was 39 and it was becoming increasingly difficult to be self-supporting.

On 25 November 1990 the closing service of Thanksgiving was conducted, 66 years after the laying of the foundation stone and the congregation joined with Finchley Park, Magill and Rostrevor to form the Morialta Uniting Church worshipping at Magill.